"KEEP"

A Report to the
Joint Committee on Information Technology
Kansas State Historical Society
December 13, 2011

KEEP stands for *Kansas Enterprise Electronic Preservation*. This is a project to preserve long-term digital records that was started in FY 2009 with the cooperation of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government.

The Need

Our government functions by and for the people. To achieve this we rely on the concept of open government through transparency. The Open Records Act gives the public access to all sorts of government records. This provides for the protection of the legal rights of citizens.

Today most documents in government are created and distributed through electronic means. Unless the State of Kansas creates a mechanism to store, preserve, and authenticate enduring electronic documents the current records of government will end up in a "black hole" where the information is no longer retrievable. This has, in fact, already happened with some records.

The law today says that companies and governments are responsible for the preservation of their digital records in regards to litigation.   When engaged in a lawsuit, it will be the responsibility of the State of Kansas to access and ensure the authenticity of its digital records. Therefore it is important to provide for a documented *chain of custody* for all electronic records, which means approaching records management in a deliberate manner.

The need to preserve electronic records is challenging and it exists in all branches of government. The most cost-effective solution is for the State of Kansas to create an enterprise-wide "Trusted Digital Repository." We should solve the problem **once** for all of state government and save the taxpayers money. KEEP is designed to do this.

The Prototype

KEEP represents an inter-branch collaboration that has the potential for local government participation. As the official State Archives, it is our job at the Historical Society to preserve records with enduring value. The goal of KEEP is to preserve digital records for as long as they are needed and provide for the public access of those records. Most state records will not have long-term or enduring value. Currently it is estimated that about 35% of the state's CITO-reportable projects impact long-term electronic records -- those that need to be kept at least 10 years. The State Records Board determines how long to keep specific executive branch records, through the records scheduling process.

KEEP is about the preservation of and access to digital records, not about the storage of documents. State digital records can be stored with the Department of Administration or outsourced to the "cloud."

What the state needs to control is the preservation and access to its records and that is the responsibility by statute of the Kansas State Historical Society. The law says we are to preserve the state's records as long as they are needed *regardless of format*.

Through the hard work of many individuals the KEEP prototype was created and delivered in June 2011. That same month the KLISS-to-KEEP connector was tested creating the capability for the automated transfer of legislative records with enduring value from the Kansas Legislative Systems and Services (KLISS) to KEEP.

Recast Project

We now need to move from the prototype into the production stage. The project is currently being recast due to financial constraints. The recast plan closes out the project after the completion of a production-ready "dark archives." The following schedule is now in place:

January 25, 2012	Ingest Enhancement Delivered
March 2, 2012	Archival Storage and Data Management Enhancement Delivered
April 24, 2012	Project Closed Out

Once funding is obtained the Kansas State Historical Society will submit a new plan covering the access and preservation aspects of KEEP. This stage will allow for public access to electronic records.

Funding

In FY 2009 the Legislature approved $149,500 to begin the process of developing KEEP. That money was supplemented by a $175,000 grant from the Information Network of Kansas (INK) and a $225,000 grant that originated from the Library of Congress.

We are currently without funding to complete the project. Due to the extreme importance of this project to state government I am attempting to reallocate funds within the Historical Society's budget to find $250,000 to complete the "dark archives." This is tough due to recent reductions in the agency budget. We have submitted a $365,000 grant proposal to INK to obtain funding for the access and preservation planning components of KEEP.

Long-term financial sustainability for KEEP is of utmost importance. The KEEP Steering Committee is looking at several models to make the system self-sustaining through a variety of fees. However, as indicated, we lack short-term funding to complete the production build.

Conclusion

KEEP will save the state money in many ways. There is a 40 to 1 ratio between archiving paper documents and digital ones – in other words, the cost is $40 for paper records as opposed to $1 for digital records. However, KEEP will only be cost-effective if all agencies and branches of government continue to band together and solve this problem in a unified way. We need your help to encourage other agencies to see KEEP as a solution to their long-term electronic records preservation problems.

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